

# NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

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## Dear Local President:



**L**AST month I reported to you my attendance at a recent White House Conference that revealed a pressing need for parent-teacher attention to the problems of increased juvenile delinquency in wartime. I added a special plea that all parent-teacher associations continue their effective work throughout the summer.

Let me reemphasize to you this month the importance of both these points. On page 2 of this *Bulletin* you will find "Barometers of Wartime Influences" that will give you a graphic realization of current dangers to children and youth. These "barometers"—the community police department, the community welfare agency, the juvenile court, and the state training school for

children already delinquent—reveal clearly that stormy weather looms ahead unless adequate action is taken.

The teen-aged boys and girls among whom the greatest increase in delinquency has been noted belong to the "lost period" of the depression. Their present problems are the "payoff" for the bad times they have already been through, increased a hundredfold by the new difficulties consequent on the war. They have suddenly assumed the privileges of maturity without preparation for its attendant responsibility, and the result may easily be disastrous unless we act promptly.

Your parent-teacher association has a role to play. Consult the wartime "barometers" in your own community; find out just what the score is. Then study your *War Handbook* and determine how best to gear your parent-teacher services to the local situation. Working throughout the summer to build up counteracting influences in the community that will stem the tide of juvenile delinquency, your parent-teacher group will have—and will have earned—the satisfying consciousness of a much-needed service well and faithfully done.

Sincerely yours,

*Virginia Klehfs*

President  
National Congress of Parents and Teachers



## NATIONAL OFFICERS NOMINATED

**T**HE nominating committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers has made public the following slate of nominees to be presented for election in May 1943:

- President—Mrs. James K. Lytle, Los Angeles, California
- First Vice-President—Mrs. L. W. Hughes, Arlington, Tennessee
- Secretary—Mrs. H. S. Klein, Huntington, West Virginia
- Treasurer—Mr. J. W. Faust, East Orange, New Jersey

In view of the recent cancellation of the national convention, which was to have been held in Chicago, balloting will be conducted by mail. Voting is not restricted to the nominees listed above.

## ARE YOU STILL LISTENING?

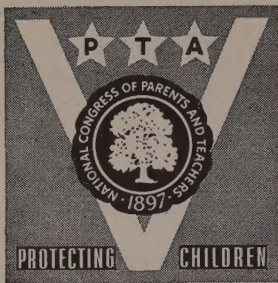
The National Congress radio series, "The Family in War," presented through the courtesy of the National Broadcasting Company, is still on the air every Saturday afternoon. The last three broadcasts are

- April 3—Till the Doctor Comes Marching Home
  - April 10—Shareholders in Victory
  - April 17—Bill Baxter Joins the P.T.A.
- NBC Network . . . 2:45 p. m., EWT

Be sure to drop a card to the Radio Project Committee and tell them what you liked best about this series of P.T.A. broadcasts.

## How can the P.T.A. help prevent juvenile delinquency and other maladjustments of youth?

1. Parent-teacher groups, through resolutions taken at their meetings and in statements furnished to the press, can foster favorable public opinion toward making school buildings, auditoriums, and school grounds available to young people who may not have access to any other meeting place for recreation and other projects.
2. The P.T.A. can sponsor activities in which young folk may feel the importance of their own contribution to the war effort.
3. Parent-teacher leaders can stress the significance of giving the teen-age girl especially an opportunity to participate in wholesome recreational activities and in wartime work suited to her abilities. Girls of this age group can roll bandages for the Red Cross, knit lap robes, read to shut-ins, care for small children, assist block mothers, run errands for rationing boards, make favors or scrap books for hospitals, plant Victory gardens.
4. The P.T.A. can supply leadership for groups in the character-building organizations. Members can open homes for meeting places, aid with refreshments, help in raising funds.



# Barometers OF WARTIME INFLUENCES

**T**HE concern of the nation for the wartime welfare of children and young people has reached an all-time high. Recently compiled statistics have shown that there is already a sufficient increase in juvenile delinquency to justify this concern, and it is obvious that there will be a further increase unless and until action has been taken.

The sources from which these statistics come are chiefly the following, which may be considered the most reliable barometers, so to speak, of undesirable wartime influences:

1. Police departments
2. Community welfare agencies
3. Juvenile courts
4. State training schools

1. The police department first reflects any noticeable change in the behavior of members of a community. Police records are detailed and carefully preserved. These records now reveal generally an increase in the number of young girls arrested in a given period, the percentage increase varying from 8 to 30 in different localities. The greater increase of wartime delinquency among girls than among boys is ascribed to the tendency of unsupervised girls to be susceptible to the glamor of false romance.

2. There are many serious problems of youth that never reach the police department's files. Problems related to health, child labor, inadequate home supervision, and failure in school work are among these.

Schools report poor attendance and many failures due to long hours spent by pupils in part-time employment. Many work from four to eight hours a day, at work that sometimes lasts until midnight or later. School and work together may take sixty or seventy hours a week. When one considers that a forty or forty-eight hour week is thought to be sufficient for an adult, it is apparent that this state of affairs cannot continue without definite harm. Undesirable activities, especially sex delinquencies, frequently follow. Welfare agencies report increasing numbers of runaways, both boys and girls; they have also noted an increase in the number of young

people requiring mental adjustment.

3. There are also many youth problems that never reach the juvenile court. This is usually due to the fact that other agencies of the community have taken care of them. Nevertheless, the number of cases dealt with by juvenile court judges is on the increase in most localities. The increase is most noticeable in the case of girls and appears to have been greater in the larger than in the smaller areas reporting.

The fact that in so many families both parents are "working around the clock" accounts, juvenile court judges find, for many of the cases that come before them. With young girls, the lure of the uniform and the glamor of a military community are blamed.

4. Boys and girls committed to state training schools show an average age today that is lower than the average age for 1941, with the middle teen-age groups making up the majority. However, a gleam of encouragement may be found in the fact that the population of most of these schools is below capacity. Authorities attribute this decrease to enlistment of older boys in active service, employment of young persons who might otherwise have been committed to these schools, and improved economic conditions in many homes.

## FACTORS AFFECTING YOUTH IN WARTIME

**M**ANY factors operate to change things for youth in a time of war. Transition from dependence on the family to substantial earning power; shifts in the location of families; division of families occasioned by war work and military service—all are profound influences upon the daily life of youth.

**The Community.**—Lack of adequate housing for the hordes of new citizens arriving in many communities is a serious problem. Limited opportunity for community recreation of a wholesome kind is another.

**Employment and Its Results.**—Large numbers of boys and girls are leaving school to take remunerative jobs. Others are carrying full-time school work and part-time employment. Young people often shift from job to job, working under conditions of varying desirability. There is a marked increase in truancy on the part of children too young to work, who consider themselves at

liberty to remain away from school because their older brothers and sisters do.

**The Armed Forces.**—Acceptance of young men into the armed services gives them adult status, which they accordingly expect and claim when it comes to selecting their amusements. This problem is heightened by the lack of adequate recreational facilities.

**Lack of Personnel.**—Many agencies that deal with the problems of young people have staff shortages that seriously threaten the effectiveness of their work. This naturally results in many other problems that would never arise under normal conditions.

**Lack of Parental Supervision.**—Absence of parents from home has resulted in neglect of children from the physical, the emotional, and the moral point of view. Fatigue of parents at the end of the day's work has often the same effect, or at least a similar one. Many children are left day after day with nobody to take any particular interest in their lives either at school or at home. Difficulties of transportation, by lengthening the hours of the parents' working day, add to this very grave problem.

## NEEDED RESOURCES FOR ADEQUATE ACTION

The chief resources needed to meet these pressing problems are

- Recreation and wholesome leisure-time activities
- Public housing projects
- Maternal and child health services
- Child welfare services of all kinds
- Day care for the children of working mothers
- An adequate police force
- Facilities for suitable detention care of children already delinquent
- Good juvenile courts
- Well-organized training schools for the rehabilitation of young delinquents

These matters deeply concern all parent-teacher associations. We have no graver responsibility today than the protection of boys and girls from the subversive influences that inevitably go with war.

(Adapted from releases of the Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor.)

**BE SURE** to read "Juvenile Delinquency—Whose Responsibility?" which will appear in the May issue of the **NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER**. The author of this article is Martha W. MacDonald, M.D., Psychiatric Services Adviser for the Children's Bureau.

# INFORMATION ON *School Lunch* PROJECT

## PURCHASE OF FOOD SUPPLIES

**C**ERTAIN changes have recently been made in the community school lunch program. Sponsoring organizations will now purchase food supplies from local merchants and farmers and will be reimbursed by the Food Distribution Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. This change is implemented by an FDA supervisor in each state, who will designate commodities purchasable by sponsoring organizations.

This news is of immediate interest to the parent-teacher association, which has long been a sponsor of the school lunch program. Parent-teacher leaders should communicate with the state FDA supervisor to learn what commodities may be purchased and the amount of the allowance per meal per child that will be repaid by the Government. This allowance may vary in different localities. Children who can pay for their lunches will continue to do so. This money may be considered part of the sponsor's contribution to the cost of the program if it is used to pay employees working on the project, to buy additional or supplementary foods, or to obtain equipment and supplies.

## TYPES OF FOOD AVAILABLE

A greater variety of foods will be made available to children under the new setup, which is expected to "by-pass" wartime transportation and storage handicaps. It will also provide a means of increasing consumption of locally grown produce, so that waste will be eliminated and all foodstuffs utilized completely.

Some idea of the variety obtainable under this plan may be obtained from a list of purchasable commodities in the southern region of the United States. The list includes butter; cheese; cottage cheese; tangerines; oranges; grapefruit; apples; snap beans; cabbage; celery; turnips and turnip greens; spinach; mustard greens; onions; Irish potatoes; sweet potatoes; lard; salt pork; fresh pork; sausage; variety meats; dried beans and peas; soy beans; peanuts and peanut butter; shell eggs; enriched white and graham flour; whole wheat cereal; corn meal; hominy grits; cane syrup; and molasses.

## VICTORY GARDENS

In consideration of the many potential or actual food shortages with which our civilian population is faced, the importance of the Victory garden this year can scarcely be overestimated. Especially for the school

## • SCHOOL LUNCH • REGISTRATION

It is most important that all local parent-teacher associations send their registration blanks promptly to their state congresses. Local units that fail to register will not receive the score card upon which certificate requirements are based.

It is not only the matter of awards, incidentally, that makes registration so important. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers is doing a magnificent job with the school lunch program on a nation-wide scale. The recognition rightly due this organization will depend to a large extent upon the overall picture obtained from these vital records when, in due course, they are sent on to the National Office. Register promptly, that the picture may be an accurate one.

lunch program is this project of vital significance.

Spring is on the way. In many parts of our country planting should already be well under way; in others, of course, the time is not ripe. In any region, however, plans can be laid and preparations matured. Does every school in your state have a Victory garden? If not, create interest in planting one without delay. Parent-teacher associations are well equipped to build community interest and to stimulate community activity in this direction, as well as in many others.

The coming summer is the period in which canning for next year's school lunch program must be done. We have been assured that canning equipment will be made available for this purpose. Volunteers for the canning project may be enlisted during the campaign to arouse interest in planting a school Victory garden.

## NEW BOOKLETS ON SCHOOL LUNCH

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has recently issued two valuable and interesting pamphlets dealing with the school lunch:

*Hunger Quits School* is an admirable introduction to the project, outlining methods of starting a school lunch program on the basis of local need. It

furnishes brief but clear explanations of all essential points, stating the reasons why this part of the nation's victory program is considered so vital. It is well illustrated.

*School Lunches in Country and City* is a fuller treatment of the subject, with more illustrations and a broader presentation. It will be particularly useful to workers already familiar with the school lunch setup who wish to keep thoroughly abreast with progress in this field. Parent-teacher chairmen and workers will find it stimulating and helpful.

## VIRGIN ISLANDS P. T. A.

A parent-teacher association has just been organized in the George Washington School, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. The new association has fifty members.

## WARTIME RESOLUTION

The Cincinnati Council of Parent-Teacher Associations, Cincinnati, Ohio, has adopted a detailed resolution on the adequate wartime care of children to guard against juvenile delinquency and other disorderly effects of war. The resolution urges all parent-teacher units in the council to accept responsibility in this field and to cooperate in obtaining better industrial working conditions as well as good day care for children.

## FATHER'S DAY, 1943

The National Father's Day Committee has announced a billion-dollar war bond drive as a means of celebrating Father's Day this year. An attempt will be made to induce each of the 33,000,000 fathers in the United States to buy at least one more \$25 war bond. The cooperation of the parent-teacher association is requested.

## JEFFERSON ANNIVERSARY

From the Bill of Rights Sesqui-Centennial Committee comes a suggested program for commemoration of the bi-centennial birthday anniversary of Thomas Jefferson, April 13, 1943. The program will be sent to interested organizations on request. The Committee's address is 17 E. 42nd St., N. Y.

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## HAS YOUR P. T. A. SUBSCRIBED THIS YEAR TO THE NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER?



**Y**OUR association is an organization whose avowed purpose is to maintain the welfare, protection, and education of children and youth. In carrying forward this high purpose, it can avail itself of a sound guide and a good companion—the *National Parent-Teacher Magazine*.

Like all other publications published by your national parent-teacher organization for its 28,000 P.T.A.'s, the Magazine is sold at cost. All your group has to do to bring it into the life of the association each month is to appropriate \$1 for a subscription. Then, ten times a year, your members will have access to the writings of the greatest experts in the country in fields of parent-teacher interest.

You definitely are missing something of real value to you in your work for children if you do not have a subscription to the *National Parent-Teacher*. In fact, since the Magazine is published for you by your own national leaders at a price within the reach of parent-teacher pocketbooks, it is good business to make maximum use of it. So authorize a subscription today and be among the thousands of local leaders who say, "I couldn't do as good a P.T.A. job without our *National Parent-Teacher*!"

### Third Front Against Axis

A news letter from the OCD suggests a "third front" against the Axis powers—a front composed of millions of V-Homes all over the nation. "The gasoline in the family car, the electricity that lights the lamps, the tin cans in the kitchen cabinet," says the report, "are all vital factors in our Army's success."

## BILL FOR FEDERAL AID TO SCHOOLS

Mrs. Mary T. Bannerman, national chairman of Legislation, has recently requested all state chairmen to study carefully the provisions of Bill S.637, now pending.

While the new bill, S. 637, authorizes the same total appropriation as did S.1313, which was endorsed last year by the National Congress and recommended to state congresses for their endorsement, there is some variation in the provisions for apportioning the money. Thorough study of the bill, says Mrs. Bannerman, is the only method by which a true appraisal of its worth can be reached.

For further information write to your state chairman of Legislation.

*Have you ordered a  
copy of "Community Life  
in a Democracy" for your  
P. T. A. Bookshelf?*

## VICTORY FARM VOLUNTEERS

With the coming on of spring the work of the Victory Farm Volunteers, an organization of high school students in training for wartime service on the farm, swings into full activity. Through the voluntary service of this organization's program, boys and girls who have been accustomed only to urban life will be given an opportunity to learn at first hand a great many valuable lessons about rural life and work. This should result not only in a substantial contribution to the national war effort but in an interchange of rural and urban points of view that will permanently improve rural-urban relationships.

The farm work done by these boys and girls will be of two kinds: (1) jobs paid for by the unit of work, such as fruit picking, and (2) general farm employment paid for in wages, usually monthly. The program is conducted on a cooperative basis with the work of the High School Victory Corps, and the same regulations and policies are in force with regard to the students' health and the working conditions provided.



## AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATIVE SERVICE

Cooperation between the parent-teacher association and the OCD is a matter that has provoked wide discussion. The following agreement between the New Jersey Office of Civilian Defense and the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers may be helpful in planning the cooperative effort in other localities, clearly defining, as it does, the separate areas of responsibility delegated respectively to the OCD block leader and the P.T.A. block mother:

- The New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers and the New Jersey Office of Civilian Defense Director will cooperate in the "block mother" and "block leader" plans.

- It is understood that the block mother's duty is solely that of providing adequate care and protection for children in the event of a test or real air raid or a similar emergency, and that whatever plan is set up for this purpose meets with the approval of the Protective Division of the local Defense Council (Air Raid Wardens).

- It is agreed that the block mother will work with the block leader if the block leader plan is established in the local community, the block leader acting as the official agent for the Defense Council in disseminating information on all phases of citizen participation in the war effort, and the block mother functioning only as above stated, as the agent for the care of children during an air raid.

- If the block mother wishes to become the block leader and take over the added responsibilities involved, she may do so, provided this meets with the approval of the local chairman of the block leader plan.

- The block leader may assign to the block mother additional duties other than her one official duty, if she or he so desires, but in carrying out these additional duties the block mother should realize that she is acting as the agent of the Defense Council and is responsible to the block leader.

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NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER**